

ABSTRACT

A method and system for evaluating a set of credentials that includes at least one group credential and that may include one or more additional credentials. A trust rating is provided in association with the at least one group credential within the set of credentials and trust ratings may also be provided in other credentials within the set of credentials. Each trust rating provides an indication of the level of confidence in the information being certified in the respective credential. In response to a request for access to a resource or service, an evaluation of the group credentials is performed by an access control program to determine whether access to the requested resource or service should be provided. In one embodiment, within any given certification path a composite trust rating for the respective path is determined. An overall trust rating for the set of credentials is determined based upon the composite trust ratings. Upon a determination that a user requesting access to a resource has an acceptable set of credentials and a satisfactory trust rating, access to the requested resource or service is granted to the user.

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